

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for coupling a hand-graspable knob to a plate comprising:

a ~~generally planar member~~ plate having a pair of generally opposed surfaces and an oblong slot ~~therebetween disposed at an engaging region,~~ aperture extending between the pair of surfaces, and with said oblong slot aperture being defined by a pair of generally parallel opposite walls spaced a predetermined distance apart;

a coupling member having an external thread set and ~~having a non-spherical elongated portion~~ a pair of generally parallel side walls extending along a length of the coupling member and spaced for insertion into the slot aperture, whereupon insertion of the side walls into the slot aperture prevents the coupling member from being rotating relative to the plate about an axis generally perpendicular to the opposed surfaces of the plate ~~for contacting the opposite walls of the oblong slot, with contact between the elongated portion and the oblong slot occurring across a substantial length of the oblong slot whereby said planar member and coupling member are in position relative to each other when said portion is inserted into the oblong slot of the planar member;~~ and

a ~~non-planar member~~ knob having an internal thread set adapted to engage the external thread set of the coupling member thereby connecting the ~~non-planar member~~ knob to the ~~planar member~~ plate, wherein portions of the pair of generally opposed surfaces of the planar member extend into the thread set of the non-planar member knob.

2. - 5. (canceled)

6. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the coupling member has a larger diameter dimension than a thickness dimension of the ~~planar member~~ plate, and the oblong slot has generally parallel sides extending between a pair of ends and a distance between the pair of ends of the oblong slot is being substantially greater than the thickness dimension.

7 - 9 (canceled)

10. (currently amended) An apparatus for connecting ~~two members together~~ a knob to a plate comprising:

a ~~first member~~ plate having a pair of generally opposed major surfaces and ~~defining an engaging region,~~ and an oblong slot aperture extending between the pair of major surfaces disposed at ~~said engaging region,~~ said oblong slot defining a pair of generally parallel planar side walls;

an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set and a pair of generally parallel side walls extending along a length of the coupling member, said side walls being spaced for insertion into the slot aperture, whereupon insertion of the side walls into the slot aperture prevents the coupling member and plate from rotation about an axis generally perpendicular to the major surfaces ~~and an engaging portion for engaging the oblong slot of the first member, said threaded coupling member removably engaging the oblong slot, and said coupling member having a pair of generally parallel planar walls engaging said walls of the first member when said engaging portion is inserted into said first member, with contact between the walls of the first member and walls of the coupling member occurring along a length of the slot thereby preventing rotation of the first member relative to the coupling member about an axis generally perpendicular to a direction of elongation of the oblong slot; and~~

a ~~second member~~ knob having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, wherein said external thread set of the threaded coupling member is threadedly received within the internal thread set, and wherein at least a portion of the plate extends ~~portions of the first member extend~~ into the internal thread set of the ~~second member~~ knob to secure the knob to the plate.

11. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the elongate threaded coupling member is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having an threaded exterior surface ~~and a substantially flat interior surface.~~

12. (canceled)

13. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the thickness of the first member plate is less than a diameter of the internal thread set, ~~and wherein the oblong slot has a pair of sides extending across a portion of the first member between a pair of ends and the first member thickness is substantially less than a distance between the pair of ends.~~

14. (currently amended) An apparatus for joining a knob to a plate ~~two members~~ via a threaded coupling member, said apparatus comprising:

a plate ~~first member~~ having an oblong slot aperture disposed proximate to an edge;

an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set and a pair of side walls spaced for insertion into the slot aperture, ~~a non-spherical engaging portion corresponding to the oblong slot of the first member, and~~ said slot side walls preventing rotation of the ~~first member~~ coupling member relative to said ~~coupling member~~ plate about an axis generally perpendicular to the slot aperture when said ~~portion of the coupling member is~~ side walls are inserted into said slot aperture; and

a ~~second member~~ knob having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the ~~first member~~ plate to secure the knob to the plate ~~to securely bind the first member to the second member.~~

15 – 24 (canceled)

25. (previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the elongate threaded coupling member is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having an threaded exterior surface and a substantially flat interior surface.

26. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the thickness of the ~~first member~~plate is less than a diameter of the internal thread set, and a distance between ends of the oblong slot aperture is substantially greater than the thickness of the plate ~~first member~~.

27 – 31. (canceled)